

TIPS FOR TRAVELERS WHO DRIVE TO MEXICO

Recent incidents involving U.S. citizens who were injured in traffic crashes in Mexico have highlighted the significant differences between the legal systems of Mexico and the United States. If you are involved in a motor vehicle crash in Mexico, it is likely that you will be detained until the local authorities can determine fault. If you are in need of medical attention, you will generally be taken to the closest medical facility for treatment while the authorities investigate the incident. If you are found to be at fault, you will be required to demonstrate financial responsibility, and post a bond to cover the estimated costs, before you will be released. Financial responsibility can be demonstrated in one of two ways:

- Possession of cash, but remember that fines may vary depending on the violation or accident. or
- Possession of automobile insurance that is issued through an **authorized Mexican insurance company**. The Secretary of Tourism recommends that you obtain full coverage insurance for your automobile.
- THE AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE THAT YOU HAVE FOR DRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES WILL **NOT** SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT.

In order to minimize potential problems while driving in Mexico, it is suggested that you adhere to the following tips:

- DON'T DRINK and DRIVE.
- Always obtain *Mexican* automobile insurance to cover **LIABILITY** and **LEGAL ASSISTANCE**. Such coverage is readily available from several established firms in San Diego County, at a cost of about \$12.00 for one day, with decreasing rates for longer stays. It's recommended that you obtain full coverage insurance for your automobile.
- If you stay in Mexico for longer than 72 hours, you must have an FM-T tourist permit. Such permits now cost 170 Mexican pesos or it's equivalent in U.S. dollars, valid for up to six months, and may be obtained at the National Immigration Institute located at the border. The FM-T permit can be paid for at any bank operating in Mexico.
- If it is determined that the consumption of alcohol or drugs contributed to a traffic crash, your Mexican insurance will **not** be valid. Don't drive while even slightly "under the influence"
HAVE A DESIGNATED DRIVER.
- It is **STRICTLY FORBIDDEN** to bring firearms or ammunition into Mexico. If you do so, and you are caught, you will go to jail. If you plan to hunt in Mexico, visit the Mexican Consulate to obtain necessary permits.
- When driving in Mexico, remember that speed limits are posted in kilometers per hour rather than miles per hour. Obey the speed limits and other traffic controls.
- Always carry a valid I.D.

- Always use your seatbelt.
- If you are on a motorcycle, remember that Mexico has a helmet law.

Remember, you are visiting another country. Respect and obey their laws, just as we expect visitors to our country to obey ours.

Should you experience an emergency while traveling in Mexico, the following are various agencies that may be contacted for assistance. Please visit the web site at <http://www.usembassy-mexico.gov/emenu.html>

United States Consulate General Tijuana

From the U.S. – 011-52-66-81-7400

From Tijuana – (66) 81-7400

From Baja California Sur – (114) 3-3566

Hours: 8 am – 4:30 pm (Monday – Friday)

**After Hours: (619) 692-2154 (evenings / weekends / holidays)
this number is an answering service**

State Secretary of Tourism of Baja California

State Tourist Assistance Offices are located in major towns and cities throughout the Baja peninsula. If you need legal aid or wish to register a complaint, bilingual staff in these offices will be able to assist you during regular business hours.

Please visit the web site at <http://www.turismobc.gob.mx> or e-mail them at asesoriatur@turismobc.gob.mx

Tijuana	(6) 688-0555
Rosarito	(6) 612-0200
Ensenada	(6) 172-3022
Mexicali	(6) 566-1116
Tecate	(6) 654-1095
San Felipe	(6) 577-1155
San Quintin	(6) 166-2728
Los Algodenes	(6) 517-7635

Tourist Information and Assistance in Baja California – 078

Green Angels

Ensenada – (617) 646-85

Tijuana – (66) 24-34-79

The Green Angels are a federally sponsored organization that patrols Mexico's main highways from 8 am to 8 pm. The Green Angels are trained mechanics that are also trained in basic first aid and carry oil, gasoline spare parts, tools and communications capabilities. You will only be charged for the equipment used; i.e. gasoline or spare parts, not for the mechanics services. The Green Angels get their name from the green and white trucks they drive.

Bi-national Emergency Medical Care Committee (BEMCC)

(619) 425-5080 (24 hours / 7 days)
492 Third Avenue, Suite 205
Chula Vista, CA 91910

Services provided to persons experiencing a serious medical emergency while in Mexico and needing assistance to return to the United States for medical care. Volunteers assist in arranging medical transportation and will make arrangements at the receiving hospital in the United States. Annual memberships are available for \$25, but not required to obtain services.

<http://www.binationalemergency.org>

When calling from Mexico, call collect and immediately notify the operator that your call is an emergency.

Baja Safari Mexico Club

1-888-411-BAJA (2252) (24 hours / 7 days)
223 Via de San Ysidro, Suite 6
San Ysidro, CA 92173

Membership travel club with toll-free emergency and non-emergency phone service from Mexico to the U.S. office. Annual membership available from the U.S. office at \$33 or \$25 online at <http://www.bajaheadquarters.com>

Among various travel services, access to discount Mexican insurance products, provides emergency Mexican road and medical assistance, travel planning and with extended services of medical evacuation / repatriation, emergency and non-emergency reimbursement benefits and expanded legal assistance.

Other Information Resources

The Auto Club of Southern California has additional information regarding legal and insurance issues in Mexico on their web site at <http://www.aaa-calif.com>. This information can be accessed without being a member.

Please remember that It's is Illegal to:

- Drink and drive.
- Drink in public and or have an open container.
- Disturbing the peace (fighting, nudity or immoral conduct)
- Posses, bring or use any weapon (Federal Felony)
- Posses, bring or consume drugs (Federal Felony)
- Posses and or use false documents.